

**PUBLIC HEARING  
CHAMBERS COUNTY COMMISSION  
10 YEAR TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

The Chambers County Commission held a public hearing on Monday, September 21, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. CST concerning the county's 10 Year Transportation Plan. The following commissioners were in attendance: Chairman David Eastridge, Commissioners Charlie Williams, James Brown, Joe Blanks, Henry Osborne and Debbie Wood. County Manager Chambers was also in attendance.

Chairman Eastridge brought the meeting to order, he thanked those that were there. He then announced that this was one of two public hearings that the Commission/Highway Department would conduct and that the next one would be at the conclusion of the next Commission meeting. The hearing is scheduled for October 5, 2015, at 4:30 p.m. CST.

County Engineer Harvill thanked everyone that came to see what the Commission and the Highway Department has put together in regards to the county's 10 Year Transportation Plan. Harvill had maps of the road and information pertaining to each project. He had information on each of the bridge projects for anyone that wanted to look at it. Chairman Eastridge stated that most all of the information will be put on the counties website, this will allow for those who could not come to the hearing to look at. Engineer Harvill gave an overall summary of how the highway department is funded. He states that all the taxes that they receive at the highway department level are collected and then distributed back out to them. Approximately seven percent of the ad valorem taxes collected in the county go to roads and bridges. Combined with the gasoline taxes the highway department receives and funds from the Alabama Trust Fund, the county has around \$2.9 million to spend each year on roads. This includes buying equipment, supplies; maintain dirt roads, right-of-way and paying employees. The county has 435 miles of paved roads and 145 bridges to maintain. He states that 139 of the county's paved roads are in bad shape and 259 are eligible for federal funding. The county has 15 bridges that are posted with weight limits and 15 that school buses can't use.

The commissioners, the highway staff and the county's legislative delegation have met on several occasions to tour the roads. At this point everyone has agreed that the county needed a plan that would be upgraded on an annual basis and that would focus on using federal monies to address high impact projects, whether it is industrial or high density residential. The county would also work toward implementing a pavement preservation program, consider allowing some roads that are paved to go to gravel, identify the most critical bridge needs in the county and look for ways to increase funding available for the maintenance on the roads. He went through the top 33 priorities in the transportation plan, noting that some are on the list because of traffic volume and others because of the number of homes. He stated that if you own a home valued at \$150,000 you pay around \$40 a year in taxes that go toward the roads and bridges.

Engineer Harvill asked if there was anyone that would like to speak or ask any questions. He was asked how the county came up with the cost estimates for the projects. He stated that they

are based on current costs, but since it is a 10-year plan and some will not be fixed for years the cost could be expected to increase.

Mr. Frickert stated that on County Road 263 is so bad that everyone either rides down the middle of the road or bypasses it completely. Harvill stated that some of the roads were paved in a 10 year span and those roads are all going to need some type of work at the same time. Chairman Eastridge states that there has been some discussion as to returning some of the roads back into gravel/dirt roads we do not want to. Harvill stated that there are some counties that are doing this. There is a lot of focus on partnering with our cities to do a lot of these projects and vice versa. Harvill commended Stanley Sellers and Daniel Lundy on the hard work that they have put into the presentation and numbers of this plan and the ATRIP projects.

Someone asked about the lights at Exit 77, Harvill stated the project will be let next week and the cost range estimate that the DOT is projecting is \$175 - \$200 thousand project and they are going to replace all the fixtures, lower the lights that are on the exit ramps down to a height that is more manageable on a city's budget to maintain from a bucket truck, the high mass light will remain the same they will just replace the fixtures. A question was asked as to why it is such a hard thing for the cities and states to maintain the lighting on a state highway when it is the cities responsibilities? Harvill stated or the counties, the biggest problem with the county is we do not have any electricians on staff nor do we have anyone certified to do any of that type of work. When it comes to traffic signals you have to be certified and know how to do the timing of the traffic lights. Therefore, we have to rely on a contractor to do this type work and it is costly.

Engineer Harvill thanked everyone for their time.

The public hearing was adjourned.